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AUTHOR Murray, Jeannette
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ABSTRACT

Apprenticeship training programs in Hawaii offer an effective means for men and women to attain skills necessary for productive work. Hawaii's two sources of apprenticeship training are the Apprenticeship Division of the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard (PHNS). Despite the efforts of these programs to change employment policies in compliance with federal regulations, only a limited number of women apprentices are in Hawaii's workforce. To increase women's participation in apprenticeship, the Apprenticeship Division implemented recruitment practices at the secondary and postsecondary school levels and developed a series of promotional materials pertaining to women's participation in the programs. The PHNS has a federally funded apprenticeship program, which, through the Federal Women's Program, organizes recruitment efforts such as career fairs, visits to high schools and community colleges, and information dissemination. In spite of these activities, in 1984, only 6.9% of the state-registered apprentices and, in 1982, 9.5% of the PHNS apprentices were women. Reasons for the lack of women in apprenticeship programs include a historic lack of exposure to certain kinds of nontraditional work; job stereotyping; the prestige associated with white collar or professional occupations; and the stigma attached to nontraditional undertakings. While the progress is slow in the transition from traditional to nontraditional work roles, the opportunities for increased pay, job security, and advancement accorded through the apprenticeship programs are being recognized by women who are not deterred by the demands of physical labor or stereotypical work attitudes. (RO)

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WOMEN AND APPRENTICESHIP IN HAWAII:

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NONTRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

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JC 860 303

Jeannette Murray, M.S., N.C.C.
Job Placement Counselor
Honolulu Community College
874 Dillingham Blvd.
Honolulu, HI 96817
Tel: (808) 845-9231

Apprenticeship training programs in Hawaii offer an effective means for men and women to attain skills necessary for productive work. In today's labor market, the need for trained, qualified workers is evident in most blue-collar trades. While men have always enjoyed the advantages of apprenticeship training, women are just beginning to recognize that there is a place for them in this nontraditional work area. The advantages of apprenticeship are many: learning a trade by actually working in it; acquiring skills that will assure employability; learning the latest methods of a trade; being paid while learning, with pay increases at regular intervals; receiving recognition as a skilled worker; developing a sense of pride of accomplishment; having better advancement opportunities due to well-rounded on-the-job and classroom training.

Hawaii's two sources of apprenticeship training are the Apprenticeship Division of the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. In recent years, both programs have attempted to increase the number of women in apprenticeship. In accordance with federal legislation such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, action was taken to remove policies and practices which excluded women or men from employment in occupations traditionally dominated by one sex only.

Despite the efforts of the apprenticeship programs to change employment policies in order to comply with federal and state equal opportunity regulations, only a limited number of women apprentices are in Hawaii's workforce. This leads one to

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question, why are not more women seeking apprenticeship as a viable alternative to traditional employment and what action can be taken to change this?

From a historical perspective, Hawaii's women have long been an integral part of the labor force. Within the ancient Hawaiian culture, women and men had clearly defined work roles which were not necessarily stereotypical. The labor was divided according to chore, not sex--women made the tapa while men cooked the food for festive occasions. Hawaiian women were admired for physical strength and were expected to be competitive, healthy, and athletic. Games of skill, daring, and strength were as much a part of the Hawaiian woman's domain as the man's.

Caucasian missionary women who came to the Islands in the 1820's and afterwards shared a similar work ethic with their Hawaiian counterparts. They were here to make a home and to work with their husbands to settle a new frontier. Though their work roles were somewhat more stereotypic than those of Hawaiian women, their commitment to hard work was evident in their establishment of schools, hospitals, and churches.

Between 1885 and 1914, 210,000 Japanese immigrants came to Hawaii, bringing with them traditional values of hard work, endurance, achievement, and tenacity so vital to their survival in a new land and culture. Japanese women and men worked industriously to insure their economic stability and to provide a better life for their children.

Later women immigrants arrivals--Chinese, Korean, Filipino and Portuguese--worked alongside their men on the plantations as

well as within the home. There was never a question raised about the virtue of an exclusive role of motherhood and homemaking for women in Hawaii. The mainland mystique of family-centered feminine work roles so prevalent in the 50's hardly touched women in Hawaii. And as mainland women's interests today turn increasingly toward career involvement, Hawaii's women have the advantage of a time-honored tradition of work outside the home.

In keeping with mainland trends, however, Hawaii's working women are concentrated in traditionally female occupational fields. According to the US Dept. of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1982, 99 percent of secretaries, 96 percent of nurses, and 82 percent of elementary school teachers were women. In contrast, women are represented in scarcely over one-fourth of the workers in the goods-producing industries nationwide. They remain underutilized and under represented in the skilled trades, including apprenticeable occupations. This trend was temporarily interrupted during World War II when women filled in for men who were called away to serve in the armed forces. These women assumed jobs in all of the skilled trades and proved themselves to be efficient and competent. Unfortunately they were forced to relinquish their jobs when servicemen returned to the work force after the war. The significance of this shift in traditional work roles was that for the first time in the history of the U.S., women nationwide proved that they were willing and able to engage in nontraditional occupations.

Today, women have the same opportunities available to them with the added advantage of apprenticeship training and a wide-

range of two-year vocational/technical training programs in community colleges. The U.S. Department of Labor requires affirmative action to increase the number of women in apprenticeship through the Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship and Training regulation published in May, 1978. In the Federal Register, dated May 12, 1978, the Department of Labor examined the status of women in apprenticeship programs and required that written affirmative action plans for apprenticeship programs include women.

In compliance with this regulation, the Apprenticeship Division of the Hawaii State Department of Labor & Industrial Relations developed a plan to increase women's participation in apprenticeship. This plan includes recruitment at the secondary and postsecondary school levels, development of audiovisual materials, printed materials, newspaper ads, brochures and flyers all pertaining to women in apprenticeship programs.

To date, women in Hawaii still comprise a minority in programs registered with the Hawaii State Apprenticeship Division. The number of females as compared with the total number of registered apprentices did not exceed 6.9 percent as indicated in a August 1984 report. At the end of 1984, a total of 41 women were enrolled in apprenticeship programs through the State Apprenticeship Division.

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, which is not under the jurisdiction of the Hawaii Apprenticeship Division, has a federally-funded apprenticeship program. Integrated in this program, is the Federal Women's Program which has a specific goal

of improving employment and advancement opportunities for women in the federal service. A primary objective of the Federal Women's Program is to increase the number of women in apprenticeship and blue-collar occupations at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. Recruitment efforts include career fairs, visits to high schools and community colleges, development of slide shows, and dissemination of information.

The percentage of women in apprenticeship at Pearl Harbor has been higher than the percentage of women in Hawaii State registered programs. In the 1982-1982 fiscal year, out of a total of 222 registrants, 21 were women, representing 9.5 percent of all registered apprentices.

The question remains as to why so few women avail themselves of the opportunity for apprenticeship training when their involvement is actively being sought out?

Perhaps one of the reasons for the poor showing of women in apprenticeable trades is a historic lack of exposure to certain kinds of nontraditional work. Many women (and men) continue to believe that there are men's jobs and there are women's jobs and that they remain mutually exclusive. Often, in talking with high school students and new college entrants, the suggestion of a woman studying welding or carpentry and a man studying cosmetology or secretarial science causes raised eyebrows and incredulous laughter. Children raised by one or both parents of blue-collar background typically receive messages from early on about the importance of education to prepare for careers in white-collar rather than blue-collar fields. The expectation is that white-collar or professional occupations will pay better and

be more prestigious. The latter may hold true, however, salary advantages increasingly fall on the blue-collar side.

Another possible deterrent to women seeking nontraditional apprenticeable occupations is the stigma connected with any nontraditional undertaking. Women often feel a lack of support from family, friends, spouses, and society in general, as well as from male co-workers, when traditional boundaries are crossed. Discrimination, sexual harassment, and lack of acceptance are the possible prices to pay for nonconformity in the work world. Lastly, unlike men, women do not have a substantial number of nontraditional role models from which to gather confidence and to derive motivation.

There is much to be said in favor of women's participation in apprenticeship. Women today comprise over 50 percent of the workforce. Nearly 51 million women 16 years of age and older were in the nation's civilian workforce in 1979. That figure represented 57 percent of the 89,536,000 women who were 16 and over. In 1984 a total of 46 million women were employed nationwide. Of this number, a record 19.5 million mothers with children under 18 years of age were in the labor force in 1984. 6.2 million families with children were maintained by mothers alone, accounting for one-fifth of all families with children. Almost half of the families maintained by a mother had incomes below the official poverty levels compared with 10 percent of two-parent families. The statistics clearly indicate that women are working in greater numbers than ever before but are concentrated mainly in the traditionally low-paying, female-

dominated occupations. Nationwide, women's earnings averaged 61 cents to every dollar earned by a man in 1984--a continuation of an age-old salary disparity. Though statistics on the salary differential between men and women in Hawaii are not available, there is no reason to doubt that the same disparity exists here.

Hawaii's working women are found predominately in clerical, retail, and service occupations that offer limited advancement and minimal pay. The average salary range for an administrative secretary in the private sector in Hawaii is $5.78-$8.66 per hour. An apprentice in painting earns between $6.36 and $14.31 per hour while a journeyman painter earns $9.01-$15.90 per hour. A salesclerk earns between $3.35 and $6.01 per hour while a carpenter apprentice earns from $10.68-$16.91 per hour. A practical nurse earns from $5.00-$6.00 per hour. A plasterer apprentice earns from $8.01 to $14.47 per hour, and a journeyman, $16.02 per hour.

The 1983 report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights entitled A Growing Crisis--Disadvantaged Women and Their Children, the following statement emphasizes the need for women's economic advancement:

> Many fully employed women heading households are poor in spite of their work efforts. In 1980, 23 million women were fully employed, of whom 3.2 million were heads of household. The poverty rate for the women heading their own families was 5.4 percent, almost 2.5 times that for nuclear families, and twice the rate for men maintaining families with no spouse present...

While progress is slow in the transition from traditional to nontraditional work roles, more and more women are finding that the opportunities for increased pay,

job security, and advancement exist for them in today's job market. The Federal Women's Program at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard offers a range of apprenticeship opportunities in 17 trade areas ranging from fabric worker, ship fitter, and sheet metal mechanic to electrician and welder. The program is open to all women, including disabled and minority women and military spouses. Approximately 180 women are employed at the shipyard in occupations typically regarded as "men's work."

The 41 women registered with the State Apprenticeship Division in 1984 represent the following trade groups: carpenters, operating engineers, cement finishers, asbestos insulators, painters, electricians, roofers, tile setters, bricklayer/masons, and sheet metal workers.

Women who choose to venture into the nontraditional world of apprenticeship do so for reasons similar to those of men: job satisfaction, better pay, challenge, an opportunity to learn a skills and to advance, a preference for physical labor, and a chance to escape boring or dead-end jobs. Apprenticeship is demanding for women as it is for men. The same requirements for physical strength and stamina apply. Many women apprentices find it to their advantage to develop muscular strength and endurance through exercise and weight lifting. Aside from the physical demands of the work, one of the greatest obstacles to be overcome is teasing or harassment by men on the job. It is a problem over which the women have little control. In a

1984 survey conducted by the Office of the State Director for Vocational Education, the following problems were cited by women apprentices:

-Journeyworkers having difficulty working with females.

-Supervisors working with female apprentices.

-Women working with women

-Not being wanted on the job site.

-Harassment; teachers and supervisors having difficulty

-With females.

-Resistance from journeyworkers to teach anything.

In conclusion, Hawaii's women are fortunate to have a tradition of steady work involvement in a variety of occupations. Two-income families, single working women, and female-headed households are all aspects of life in the islands. As fully participating members of the work force, women in Hawaii must look toward occupations affording both career satisfaction and monetary rewards. Apprenticeship offers such opportunity for women who are not deterred by the demands of physical labor or stereotypical work attitudes.

When women are fully established in the trades, there will be less of a distinction between male and female work boundaries. But for the pioneers in this movement, the way is likely to be difficult initially. Women can stand to profit considerably when self-imposed restrictions on career choice are removed. As one woman apprentice so aptly put it: "(Success) has a lot to do with your attitude. Working

successfully in an uncomfortable situation is governed by what is in your mind."

To the women of Hawaii, the doors of apprenticeship are wide open. State and Federal programs are actively recruiting for women in the trades. Will Hawaii's women meet the challenge of nontraditional employment? The question remains unanswered.

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